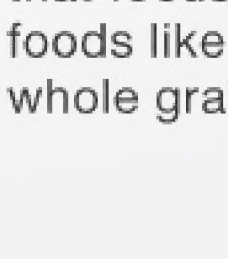


SPRING “CLEAN” YOUR DIET

What does it mean to “eat clean”? It means to eat fresh, unprocessed foods. The experts from NorthShore University HealthSystem explore its health benefits and share some simple guidelines for giving your diet a yearlong spring clean.



WHAT IS CLEAN EATING?



RICH DIET

IT'S A BALANCED DIET

that focuses on natural, nutrient-rich foods like fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins.

BENEFITS

It's good for your colon!

A “clean” diet can improve the health of your colon and help reduce your risk of colon cancer.

It's an easily sustainable lifestyle change that avoids these common diet pitfalls:



SLOW METABOLISM

Some weight-loss seekers cut too many calories and skips meals, which can slow one's metabolism and cause weight gain when normal eating habits are resumed.



ADDED SALT, SUGAR AND PRESERVATIVES

A microwaveable meal or diet-friendly cookie may be low in fat and calories, but it's probably high in flavor-enhancing ingredients like salt, sugar and artificial flavors and preservatives.

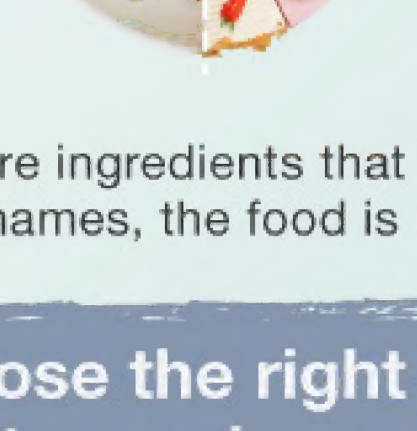
CLEAN EATING GUIDELINES:

Choose:

UNPROCESSED, NATURAL FOODS

Unprocessed foods are fresh and have few (if any) added artificial ingredients and preservatives.

Examples: fresh fruits and vegetables, unsalted nuts and seeds, unrefined grains like brown rice, lentils, beans and oatmeal.



Avoid:

PROCESSED, PRE-PACKAGED FOODS

Processed foods—often in low-fat and low-calorie options—have artificial flavors and preservatives added in order to extend shelf-life.

Examples: sweeteners, canned fruits, refined grains like white bread, white rice, pasta, frozen meals and fast foods.

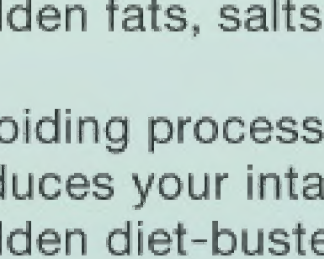
TIP:

If there are ingredients that have long, hard-to-pronounce names, the food is most likely processed.

Eat Healthy: Choose the right source of protein, carbohydrates and unsaturated fats.

PROTEINS

Protein helps build muscle and keeps you feeling full longer.



Healthy proteins: turkey breast, salmon, low-fat cheese, yogurt and eggs.

COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

Complex carbohydrates take longer for the body to break down into sugar and are a good source of energy.



Healthy complex carbohydrates: whole grain pasta, brown rice and lentils.

UNSATURATED FATS

Fats help your body feel satisfied and may help protect your heart.



Healthy fats: avocados, walnuts and olive oil.

WATCH FAT, SALT AND SUGAR INTAKE.

Processed foods are full of hidden fats, salts and sugars. Avoiding processed foods reduces your intake of these hidden diet-busters.

EAT 5-6 SMALL MEALS THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

This will prevent overeating and keep blood sugar levels stable.

AVOID DRINKING YOUR CALORIES.

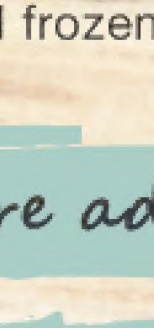
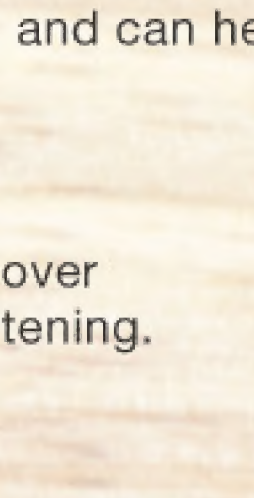
Choose water over soda and other sugary drinks. Limit your intake of alcohol. Try to drink 2 liters of water daily.



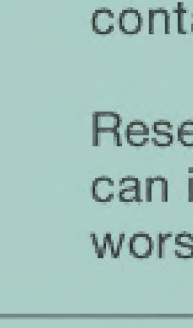
YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

SNACK HEALTHIER

If you are craving a savory snack, pair hummus with carrots rather than chips and crackers that are high in sodium, calories and fat.



If you are craving a sweet treat, opt for a natural nut butter instead of cookies and candy bars. The healthy fats found in nuts are good for your heart and can help lower cholesterol.

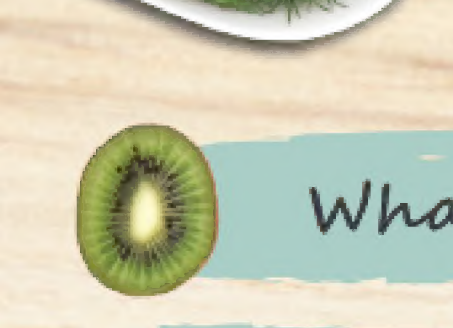


COOK SMARTER

Choose olive or coconut oil over margarine or vegetable shortening.

PLAN FOR PRODUCE AT EVERY MEAL

Increasing your vegetable intake is extremely beneficial. Make it easier by grabbing bagged leafy green salads and frozen vegetables from the grocery store.



What are additives and preservatives?

Artificial coloring



Processed foods and beverages contain food colors and chemical dyes.

Research has shown that artificial coloring can increase hyperactivity in children and worsen the symptoms of asthma.

High fructose corn syrup



High fructose corn syrup is commonly found in soft drinks. Research has shown that high fructose corn syrup can raise the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Aspartame



Aspartame is an artificial sweetener.

Studies have shown that aspartame could be a potential cause of seizures and headaches, and that it can negatively affect mood and mental performance.

WHEN TO BUY

- SPRING
- SUMMER
- FALL
- WINTER

Asparagus
Radishes
Arugula
Mushrooms
Strawberries
Pears
Oranges
Melons
Swiss chard



Peaches
Apricots
Nectarines
Cherries
Raspberries
Blueberries
Beets
Zucchini
Summer squash
String beans

Cucumbers
Carrots
Blackberries
Brussels sprouts
Eggplants
Okra
Melons
Tomatoes
Peppers



Turnips
Winter squashes
Celery root
Parsnips
Sweet potatoes
Carrots
Rutabagas
Leeks

Sources

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